

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ECHEVERRIA REMARKS ABOUT MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS

1. SUMMARY. PRES. ECHEVERRIA, INTERVIEWED IN YUGOSLAVIA AT CONCLUSION OF EUROPEAN TOUR, SAID HE THOUGHT "OLD AND LACERATING" PROBLEM OF PANAMA CANAL WOULD BE "ESSENTIAL PROBLEM" AT NEXT WEEK'S MFM IN MEXICO. ALSO IMPORTANT WOULD BE QUESTION OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS. IN GENERAL, HE SAID, VIS-A-VIS THE U.S. "WE OF LATIN AMERICA ARE THE DISUNITED STATES OF THE SOUTH". END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT LUIS ECHEVERRIA, IN FEB 15 PRESS CONFERENCE IN BELGRADE AS HE CONCLUDED EUROPEAN TOUR, REPLIED AT LENGTH TO REPORTER'S QUESTION ABOUT UPCOMING MEETING OF LATIN AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER IN MEXICO CITY.

3. IN HIS REPLY, ECHEVERRIA BEGAN BY NOTING "FACT THAT, VIS-A-VIS THE UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA, WE ARE THE DISUNITED STATES OF THE SOUTH IN LATIN AMERICA." TURNING TO AGENDA, HE SAID THAT AMONG MANY IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO BE ANALYZED, "SURELY THE MOST IMPORTANT" WOULD BE TO DEFINE "THAT OLD AND LACERATING QUESTION OF THE PANAMA CANAL", ON WHICH MEXICO DURING THE THREE YEARS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION

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HAD LENT ITS SUPPORT TO PANAMA.

4. ONLY OTHER AGENDA ITEM ECHEVERRIA SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED WAS THAT OF ACTIVITIES OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA. HE SAID HEART OF PROBLEM IS THAT WHILE "OUR COUNTRIES SHOULD, AND WANT TO, PURSUE THEIR AUTONOMOUS ECONOMIC GROWTH" AND NEED FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN ORDER TO DO SO, "THEIR CULTURES ARE FREQUENTLY DEFORMED BY (MULTINATIONALS) COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING; THE ECONOMY OF EACH COUNTRY SHOULD CONFORM TO THAT COUNTRY'S SPIRIT, IDIOSYNCRACIES AND OBJECTIVES, WHEREAS THE MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS WERE BORN TO EARN GREATER PROFITS FROM COUNTRIES IN WHICH THEY OPERATE, WHICH IS LOGICAL.... PURE DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR ITS OWN SAKE, CAN HAVE A PROFOUNDLY DEFORMING EFFECT ON THE NATURE OF A COUNTRY".

5. ECHEVERRIA WENT ON TO STATE THAT AIM OF MFM SHOULD BE TO ALLOW DISCUSSION OF THESE AND OTHER PROBLEMS, PERMITTING GREATER UNDERSTANDING ON BASIS OF MUTUAL RESPECT. (IN REPLY TO SEPARATE QUESTION CONCERNING OPPOSITION TO HIS PROPOSED CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES, ECHEVERRIA SAID THERE HAD BEEN "INDIFFERENCE AND LACK OF COMPREHENSION BY U.S., USSR, JAPAN AND EEC, WHICH FREQUENTLY DID NOT UNDERSTAND PROBLEMS OF THIRD-WORLD COUNTRIES", ALTHOUGH RECENT DEVELOPMENTS SUCH AS ENERGY CRISIS AND RAW-MATERIAL SHORTAGES HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT IMPORTANT CHANGES IN THIS SITUATION.)

6. FINALLY, ECHEVERRIA SAID THAT IN HIS FEB 21 OPENING ADDRESS TO MFM HE WOULD SPEAK OF "MEXICAN CONVICTION" THAT THERE CAN BE NO REAL ECONOMIC GROWTH IF THERE ARE NO CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTIES, AND THAT "OUR COUNTRIES" CAN ONLY DEVELOP THOSE LIBERTIES BY LIVING IN ACCORD WITH THOSE CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES PROCLAIMED WHEN THEY ACHIEVED INDEPENDENCE.
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